

31 October 1969

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: The October Government Executive Article on CIA

1. The article on CIA in the Government Executive makes three basic charges:

a. The product of CIA is not as good as it could and should be because of the conflict between the expert and the generalist.

b. CIA is not fulfilling its role as "honest broker" in providing intelligence to policy makers.

c. These conditions are alleged to have become more serious since the advent of the Nixon Administration.

As with most such charges there is a grain of truth in some of this. But what truth there is here is neither peculiar to CIA or government agencies nor a new phenomenon within large research organizations.

2. Early in the article the author creates the image of the "expert" or "analyst" who has "in depth knowledge", "virtually unassailable judgment", and "proven records of performance". This paragon is then put in opposition to the "generalist", or "manager" who has been elevated to his position where "his hard-gained expertise is lost". Having identified the hero (the expert) and the villain (the generalist), the author then constructs a script describing

the struggle between Right ("a penetrating insight into a crucial question") and Adversity ("a wishy-washy... type of nonintelligence").

3. There are certain general observations that can be made about these points. First, any analyst who is worth his salt complains about his supervisors and how they handle his material. A good intelligence expert thinks he knows-- and he does know--more about his specialty than his supervisors. This is his job. What his generalist superiors bring to bear is an appreciation of other factors which are outside the competence of the specialist. Obviously, a junior analyst does not always understand this and may resent the role of his superiors.

4. Not infrequently an expert has an inflated view of the importance of his work. He wants to provide the policy makers with all he knows about the subject, which is generally more than busy men can use. He sometimes obscures conclusions with detail and introduces nuances of little value for decisions. The author reflects this type of expert's views throughout the article.

5. The charges that CIA is not fulfilling its role as an "honest broker" of intelligence seems to reflect the disappointment of an analyst who believes that wrong decisions have been made. A truly dedicated expert finds it hard to believe that anyone who knows what he knows could take a decision different from his own. He feels that his work has been ignored, that his organization has lost prestige, or that the "real intelligence" has been watered down. He believes that, if he could have talked to the policy makers directly, the policy which he supports would have been adopted. He does not realize that most foreign policy and military decisions are based on broader considerations than his own specialty addresses.

6. Finally, the charge that in some way CIA's role has decreased under the Nixon Administration is a misreading of the situation. Under the revived and expanded NSC structure, the role of CIA in providing intelligence for policy making has become considerably more visible and systematized. The Director and other officials and experts from CIA participate fully at all levels of the NSC structure. Intelligence inputs into policy discussions are solicited not only through the NSC mechanism but also directly by the White House.

7. In sum, what this article reflects is a parochial view of the role of CIA and intelligence in the formation of policy in the new administration. It has the ring of sincerity and the perspective which accompanies a worm's eye view.

"thus vastly increasing any opponent's difficulties in insuring penetration."

The concept of putting *Minutemen* ICBMs on surface ships, to get them out of the United States and make them mobile targets instead of fixed ones, seems likely to result in bitter conflict with the Air Force if pressed by the Navy. An Air Force proposal to give a portion of its *Minutemen* mobility by mounting them on trains, which would have moved at random about the United States, was killed a number of years ago and it seems unlikely that the *Minuteman* train idea could be revived in the present climate of Congressional concern over transportation of allegedly hazardous military materials about the country. For protection of its ICBMs, the Air Force now relies upon silos hardened against nuclear blasts.

CIA

Internal Friction

Things are not going well within the CIA, and it is not going unnoticed at the White House according to informed sources.

Friction is common at various working levels at the agency, and what has evolved since the Nixon Administration took over is a classic battle between the "generalists" and the "experts."

Throughout its history, CIA has tried to play honest broker, fending off the sometimes biased use of intelligence by the Pentagon and State Department. All in all, it has been pretty successful. Sometimes, however, and with alarming frequency lately, CIA has not done well, showing up on critical issues as merely an "also ran."

Experts Not Allowed to Speak

Government Executive's sources indicate that CIA's experts (and it has some of the best in Government) are not being allowed to speak. Many of the persons with indepth knowledge and virtually unassailable judgment and proven records of performance are simply out of the mainstream.

This is due largely to the fact that many of their substantive views are not in accord with the more conventional views of the management. The sources reveal that on many of the crucial issues lately—the SS-9, the ABM and Vietnam—the experts have had the guts to disagree with the popular concepts.

The management, however, employs the age-old bureaucratic mechanism of the conference to muzzle the experts. By this process everyone remotely concerned with a problem has to agree to the final version of a study.

The theory is to bring in the best ideas from everyone. The fallacy in this, however, lies in the fact that not everyone is equally capable or perceptive.

Sources state that lately what may have started out to be a piece of penetrating insight into a crucial question more often than not turns out to be a wishy-washy, "maybe it will" and "maybe it won't" type of nonintelligence. Some of the recent studies reportedly have covered every possibility 10 men can think of without saying just what it is that could really happen.

One of the reasons behind this difference of views stems from professional approach. First-rate analysts have built up an understanding of a problem through years of close association with it. They understand the nuances and background to the problem and, in effect, are capable of thinking like the enemy thinks.

In many cases this type of thinking defies conventional American logic. Vietnam is a good example. American logic demanded that the Tet Offensive of 1968 was a military failure; North Vietnamese logic, on the other hand, viewed it as a success, and our sources indicate that analysts at CIA said so.

First-rate intelligence requires first-rate people, people who are unafraid of questioning the conventional wisdom and taking a stance. These are the people who should be making the intelligence judgments and not the senior officer present.

But, *Government Executive's* sources indicate that the management in certain production areas at CIA has cultivated a breed of generalists who have been elevated from analyst jobs to positions where their hard-gained expertise is soon lost. They adhere to the concept that a man worth his salt can do anything, and thus they have taken to shifting men to different management responsibilities over substantive production, with little regard for the man's preference or substantive skill.

Our sources, some of whom have been in intelligence for a number of years, are angry. They claim that the greatest single asset of the CIA is its people who know and understand a problem area. It is not, they claim, the so-called managers who would prefer to make generalists out of first-rate analysts.

Young Staffers' Solution

Younger staffers with whom *Government Executive* spoke voiced similar complaints but have a different solution. They leave! They revealed that they came to CIA thinking of it as something different... apart from the bureaucratic world. But they confess that it's as bad as anyone could imagine—a gigantic bureaucracy.

Understandably *Government Executive* cannot reveal its sources, but can state that they represent a cross section of young and old from the CIA. They are not simply "cranks," most are dedi-

cated professionals.

The primary purpose of intelligence in their view is to provide the President with sufficient information about a development in foreign affairs which will permit the formulation of a position or policy in time to effectively cope with the situation. In this type of situation, intelligence which warns and assesses the seriousness of an event before it happens is highly prized. Obviously the staffers with whom *Government Executive* talked feel this is not happening these days.

Communication Needed

They report that the White House finally reacted to the kinds of intelligence the agency was issuing. Henry A. Kissinger, White House Assistant for National Security Affairs, now only wants the facts. Apparently he will make all the judgments. The CIA people feel that this is a bit pretentious of Kissinger. He is not an expert in all areas of the world, they claim.

They hope that Kissinger and his staff will look into the problems within CIA, however. In their view, it would not take a great deal of effort to determine who the real experts are in the community and who the managers are. There should be communication between these experts and the policy-makers in the view of many staffers at CIA, but they are unable to do anything about it themselves.

DOD INTELLIGENCE

Resource Management

When Melvin Laird took over the Pentagon, knowledgeable wags in Washington predicted that the days of the McNamara systems analysis crowd were definitely numbered.

Laird had been particularly critical of that approach to problem-solving before assuming his post as Secretary of Defense. Now, however, changes have occurred in his thinking according to informed sources.

Laird reportedly knows there is a value to systems analysis if it is properly managed. An example cited for *Government Executive* was the approach being used by his staff in studying the enormous problems facing Defense intelligence. This is a \$3-billion a year program and the studies done so far indicate that systems analysis will play a prominent role in untangling the spiraling inefficiencies brought to light.

Among some of the problems: assigning priority objectives to an enormous collection effort, organizational inefficiency and a tremendous amount of duplication of effort. Institutional bias and competition among the services in the nonscientific fields of intelligence also will receive overdue examination.